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Chairman: Mr. Sial (Vice-Chairman) (Pakistan)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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In the absence of Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Sial (Pakistan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda Item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/54/3 (chaps. I, VII (Sections B and C) and IX)

1. In the absence of comments, the Chairman proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council that had been allocated to the Committee.

2. *It was so decided.*

3. Ms. Archini (Italy) said that her delegation was happy that the Committee had completed its consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council. The past year had been a very busy one for the Council, and her delegation hoped that it would be equally active in the future. It noted in particular that the President of the Council had kept his word concerning the completion of its work on the "seven points" outlined in his foreword to the annual report.

4. Mr. Ekorong A Dong (Cameroon) said that his delegation endorsed the comments made by the representative of Italy.

Agenda Item 121: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.36 concerning agenda item 48 (A/C.5/54/38)

5. Mr. Mselle (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) orally introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/54/38), said that draft resolution A/54/L.36 and the recent decision by the Security Council in its resolution 1277 (1999) would phase out the current International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) and establish a new International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (MICAH). The Secretary-General had estimated the cost of the new mission, including the residual cost of MICIVIH, at \$24.8 million. An amount of \$14.5 million would be funded

from extrabudgetary resources and \$10.3 million from the regular budget.

6. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the estimate proposed by the Secretary-General; in a few cases it had requested that additional clarification be submitted directly to the Fifth Committee.

7. The cost of extending MICIVIH to 15 March 2000 was \$1.2 million gross. That amount was to be funded from the regular budget and was included in the \$10.3 million gross to be authorized and charged against the provision for special missions under section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. The cost of extending MIPONUH to 15 March was estimated at \$2.2 million gross.

8. The Advisory Committee had previously authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to \$2.2 million gross in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/233 A.

9. Ms. Buergo Rodríguez (Cuba) said that her delegation would like more time to consider the statement of programme budget implications and the comments of the Advisory Committee. Her country supported the new mission.

10. The amount of \$24 million needed to establish the new mission in Haiti should be prorated among all the Member States in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter. The Secretary-General proposed that, of the \$24 million, some \$14.7 million should come from voluntary contributions on the ground that that amount would be used for the technical assistance component of the programme. Her delegation asked why it was proposed that technical cooperation activities should be financed by voluntary contributions and what the difference was between the technical cooperation activities to be carried out under the new mission (MICAH) and those previously carried out under MICIVIH. She asked how technical cooperation activities had been funded under MICIVIH; she drew attention in that connection to General Assembly resolution 53/95, which specified that technical assistance would be a component of the mission. She also asked whether there had been any trust funds available to support the technical assistance component of MICIVIH and, if so, what amount had been involved.

11. The Secretary-General indicated that \$9,475,144 could be made available from the trust fund for the enhancement of the UNSMIH/UNTMIH capacity, which meant that there was a deficit of some \$5.3 million, although her delegation noted the statement of the Advisory Committee that some States had indicated to the Secretariat their willingness to provide funds. Her delegation felt that only a prorated assessment would ensure solid and stable funding, assuming that Members of the Organization met their financial obligations. The proposed means of financing seemed to be directed at reinforcing the tendency to replace prorated assessments by voluntary contributions in the context of a budgetary policy of zero growth which had not been approved by the General Assembly and which had far-reaching adverse effects on the functioning of the Organization.

12. She asked the Secretariat to provide information on the extent of support from the Organization of American States (OAS) for the mission in Haiti in 1999, and on the prospects for similar support in the future.

13. **Ms. Shearouse** (United States of America) said that her country firmly supported the work of the United Nations missions in Haiti and believed that their success was essential to the future of democracy in that country as well as to its future prosperity. Her delegation therefore strongly supported the draft resolution to create MICAHA. Paragraph 10 of the draft resolution authorized the Secretary-General to utilize the amounts allocated in the regular budget for MICIVIH, under its current mandate, for activities undertaken by MICAHA. That language implied that the level of funding for MICAHA would be the same as that received by MICIVIH in 1999, namely \$6,769,600. Her delegation supported the provision of that amount in regular budget funds, to be supplemented by voluntary contributions. Her Government intended to make several voluntary contributions, including \$7.2 million in prior contributions belonging to her Government that remained in the United Nations trust funds for the enhancement of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH) and the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH). It also intended to make an additional voluntary contribution to the MICAHA trust fund in the coming months and to make available a medical facility for MICAHA personnel and either to contract the staff for such a facility directly or to reimburse the Organization for reasonable staff costs. It

would also work with others to see if there were ways of ensuring continued helicopter support for the mission.

14. **Ms. Johnson** (Canada) urged the members of the Committee to bear in mind the time constraints for the adoption of a decision so as to enable the Secretariat to begin to prepare for the new mission, which her delegation supported. It was important to ensure a smooth transition to MICAHA.

15. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the focus of MICAHA, unlike that of MICIVIH, was primarily on technical cooperation and for that reason the Secretary-General had proposed that much of the funding should be in the form of voluntary contributions rather than assessed contributions under the regular budget.

16. The financing of MICIVIH had been entirely from assessed contributions. As far as a shortfall was concerned, of a total extrabudgetary requirement of \$14.7 million, almost \$9.5 million had already been identified. Further contributions were anticipated and the Committee would be informed in the event of there being any actual shortfall. Regarding participation by the Organization of American States (OAS), there had been a substantial OAS component in MICIVIH but that had tapered off. It was not anticipated that there would be any involvement of OAS in MICAHA.

17. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that her delegation was not entirely satisfied with the information that had been provided by the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division. She would like more details of the change of approach between the two missions regarding the technical cooperation component. The entire cost of the new mission should be met from assessed contributions.

18. **The Chairman** proposed that the matter be referred to informal consultations.

19. *It was so decided.*

Programme budget implications of draft resolution II contained in document A/54/604 concerning agenda item 115 (A/C.5/54/36)

20. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), orally presenting the Advisory Committee's report on the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft

resolution II contained in the report of the Third Committee on the right of peoples to self-determination (A/54/604), said that the Secretary-General had submitted an estimate of \$184,600. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of that amount which, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

21. **The Chairman** proposed that the Committee, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/54/36) and the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution II recommended by the Third Committee in its report on the right of peoples to self-determination, an additional requirement of \$184,600 would arise under section 22 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

22. *It was so decided.*

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.24/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 47 (continued) (A/C.5/54/34)

23. **The Chairman** recalled that the Committee had taken up the statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.24/Rev.1 at its 41st meeting and had decided to defer a decision pending submission of other statements of programme budget implications.

24. He proposed that the Committee, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/54/34) and the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/54/L.24/Rev.1, the requirements of \$187,700 would be charged against the provision of \$90,387,200 for special political missions requested in section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

25. *It was so decided.*

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/54/L.7/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 155 (continued) (A/C.5/54/35)

26. **The Chairman** recalled that the Committee had taken up the statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/54/L.7/Rev.1 at its 41st meeting and had decided to defer a decision

pending submission of other statements of programme budget implications.

27. He proposed that the Committee, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/54/35) and the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.6/54/L.7/Rev.1, an additional requirement of \$105,200 would arise under section 8 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

28. *It was so decided.*

29. **Ms. Shearouse** (United States of America) said that, while her delegation had not opposed the Committee's decision, efforts should continue to determine whether the additional requirement of \$105,200 could be absorbed within the existing budget proposals for the work of the International Law Commission.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 76 (f) (continued) (A/C.5/54/31 and Add.1)

30. **The Chairman** recalled that the Committee had taken up the statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1 at its 41st meeting and had decided to defer a decision pending submission of other statements of programme budget implications.

31. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway) sought clarification of the estimated total cost of the services of the governmental experts referred to in paragraph 14 (a) of document A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1 and of whether any pledges of resources had been received thus far. She also wished to receive clarification of the statement in paragraph 20 of document A/C.5/54/31 that no other provisions had been made under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 or under section 26 for other activities related to the sessions of the preparatory committee and the conference. Lastly, it would be useful to have additional information on the modalities for the convening of the group of governmental experts.

32. **Mr. Santos** (Mozambique) said that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons was a matter of grave importance which had a direct impact on the lives of people everywhere. Mozambique therefore

fully supported the decision to convene a United Nations conference on the subject. While the provision of summary records for meetings of the conference and its preparatory committee would constitute a deviation from the guidelines laid down in General Assembly resolution 37/14 C, in which the Assembly confirmed that summary records should not be provided to special conferences and their preparatory organs, it would not constitute a precedent. He hoped that the views of delegations on the matter could be accommodated.

33. **Mr. Takahara** (Japan) said that, given the direct impact of small arms and light weapons on civil society, it was important for the conference to have a meaningful outcome. While reaffirming its commitment to the United Nations budgetary process, Japan hoped that all delegations would support the proposal to provide summary record coverage.

34. **Mr. Yusuf** (United Republic of Tanzania) supported the statement made by the representative of Mozambique and urged delegations to support the convening of the conference.

35. **Mr. Du Preez** (South Africa) said that his delegation also supported the statement made by the representative of Mozambique. While summary records might not be necessary for all meetings of the preparatory committee, they should be provided for those meetings at which decisions were taken. The Secretariat had indicated that the cost of such coverage could be met from within available financial resources.

36. **Mr. Peixoto** (Brazil), joined by **Mr. Sareva** (Finland), said that his delegation supported the statement made by the representative of Mozambique.

37. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to questions raised, said that to date no pledges of extrabudgetary resources had been received for funding the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. The resource requirements for the convening of the international conference and its preparatory committee were summarized in paragraph 19 of document A/C.5/54/31. Those requirements included an amount of \$302,000 for three meetings in 2000-2001 of the Group of Governmental Experts, which had already been included in section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. That amount, however, must be netted against the total of \$1,025,100 in non-conference-servicing requirements for an adjusted figure of \$723,100.

38. Concerning the modalities for the convening of the Group of Governmental Experts, paragraph 14 (a) of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1 provided that the experts would be appointed on the basis of equitable geographical representation.

39. The proposal for summary record coverage was on the strict understanding that coverage would be provided only for those meetings at which decisions were to be taken. Any additional requirements would be reported in the context of the budget performance report. Additional resource requirements of \$30,000 would arise if the proposed press kits were prepared in all six official languages, thus bringing the total non-conference-servicing costs to \$753,100.

40. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway) said that Norway supported the convening of the conference because of the critical need to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. Her Government was ready to submit its views on the feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of such weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States.

41. **The Chairman** proposed that, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General and the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the following draft decision:

"Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1, an additional requirement of \$753,100 would arise in the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 under section 4 (Disarmament) (\$384,600) and under section 26 (Public information) (\$368,500). In addition an amount of \$56,500 would be required under section 32 (Staff assessment), to be offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment). These requirements will be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

"The Committee also decides, without prejudice to paragraph 8 of Assembly resolution 37/14 C, to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note that if option 4 of paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/54/31/Add.1 is agreed, the requirements for summary records would be minimal. Such requirements, if necessary, would be reported in the context of the budget performance report."

42. **Mr. Takahara** (Japan) said that the draft decision which the Chairman had just read out should be amended to reflect the strong support which the proposal to provide summary records had received from delegations. He wished to suggest the following wording for the second paragraph of the proposed decision:

"The Committee also decides, without prejudice to paragraph 8 of Assembly resolution 37/14C, to recommend to the General Assembly that the Secretary-General be requested to provide summary records for those meetings at which decisions would be taken."

43. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that it might be helpful for the secretariat to circulate in writing the various versions of the draft decision which had been proposed together with their corresponding programme budget implications. While her delegation was in no way opposed to the convening of the conference, it remained unclear about the specific terms of the decision that was about to be taken.

44. **The Chairman** said that the decision was based on the statement submitted by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee's recommendations thereon. The only additional expenditure would arise from the issuance of the press kits in three additional languages. Summary records were proposed only for those meetings at which decisions were to be taken.

45. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) reiterated that a total provision of \$753,100 was being proposed for non-conference-servicing requirements. Should the General Assembly decide on the provision of full summary record coverage, an additional appropriation of \$448,900 would be required under section 2. The Committee, however, seemed to support the option to provide more limited summary record coverage which, in the view of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, would be possible without the need for additional appropriations. In the unlikely event that the demand for summary records was higher than anticipated, the additional requirements would be reflected in the performance report for the biennium 2000-2001.

46. **Mr. Yusuf** (United Republic of Tanzania) supported the amendment proposed by the representative of Japan.

47. **Ms. Shearouse** (United States of America) said that, in the light of the clarifications provided by the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, her delegation wished to propose that the words "and that the requirement for these records would be minimal" should be added to the amendment proposed by the delegation of Japan.

48. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) supported the amendment proposed by the representative of Japan. The Committee should not prejudice the extent to which summary records would be needed.

49. **Mr. Sulaiman** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that summary records should be provided for all meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts, not only those at which decisions were taken. However, in view of the difficulty of ensuring resources, his delegation would agree to the provision of summary records for only those meetings at which decisions were taken. He asked the United States representative to reconsider her proposal, because it would further restrict the resources available for summary records, and called on the Committee to adopt the proposal as initially formulated.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

50. **The Chairman** proposed that on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General and the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the following draft decision:

"Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1, an additional requirement of \$753,100 would arise in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 under section 4 (Disarmament) (\$384,600) and under section 26 (Public information) (\$368,500). In addition an amount of \$56,500 would be required under section 32 (Staff assessment), to be offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment). These requirements will be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

"The Committee also decides, without prejudice to paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 37/14C, to recommend to the Assembly that the Secretary-General should be

requested to provide summary records for only those meetings at which decisions will be taken."

51. *It was so decided.*

52. **Ms. Shearouse** (United States of America) said that her delegation recognized the importance of convening the conference, but it was the Committee's responsibility to ensure the optimal use of available resources. Her delegation would therefore continue to address the resource requirements under sections 4 and 26. It had not opposed the decision just taken on the understanding that there would be no additional resource requirements for the provision of summary records.

53. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that it was her delegation's constant concern to ensure in all cases that the additional resources needed for carrying out mandates and new activities approved by the General Assembly were made available. That was also a priority and a duty for the Committee.

54. **Mr. Ekorong A. Dong** (Cameroon) said that his delegation welcomed the draft decision, for the topics to be discussed at the conference were of particular importance for the countries of Africa.

Construction of additional conference facilities at Addis Ababa (A/54/7/Add.5 and A/54/431)

Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/29)

Proposed abolition of two General Service posts under income section 3 (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/14)

Internal and external printing practices at the Organization (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/18)

Temporary assistance for meetings: requirements for 2000-2001 (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/19)

Rental of United Nations premises by press and other entities (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/25)

Section 26. Public information (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/27)

Use of general temporary assistance for specific positions (A/54/7/Add.5; A/C.5/54/33)

55. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that with the exception of the construction of additional conference facilities at Addis Ababa the reports of the Secretary-General dealt with in the ACABQ report (A/54/7/Add.5) had been submitted in response to the comments and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in its first report on the proposed programme budget.

56. On the question of conference facilities at Addis Ababa the Advisory Committee recommended (A/54/7/Add.5, para. 4) that the General Assembly should take note of the report of the Secretary-General.

57. The Advisory Committee recommended in connection with unforeseen and extraordinary expenses that the authority of the Secretary-General to commit funds without the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee should be increased from \$5 million to \$8 million (para. 7). The other issues raised in the Secretary-General's report would be monitored and, if necessary, revisited by the Advisory Committee.

58. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the proposal to abolish one General Service post in Geneva under income section 3 (para. 15).

59. With regard to internal and external printing practices, the Advisory Committee recommended that the report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session should take account of the observations made in paragraphs 16 to 19 of its report.

60. The Advisory Committee had not found the Secretary-General's note on temporary assistance for meetings entirely satisfactory. Its comments were contained in paragraphs 20 to 24.

61. ACABQ had not completed its review of the Secretary-General's note on rental of United Nations premises (paras. 25-28) and would revert to the matter upon receipt of the requested information.

62. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the Secretary-General's note on section 26 (paras. 29-33).

63. Lastly, the Advisory Committee was dissatisfied with the secretariat's practices with regard to the use of general temporary assistance for specific positions. There were several instances of posts which should be clearly classified as either temporary or established. The Advisory Committee recommended that the

situation should be reviewed in the biennium 2000-2001.

64. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba), referring to temporary assistance for meetings, said that her delegation would like to know when the further justification requested by the Advisory Committee from the secretariat in paragraph 20 of its report would be available, for the Fifth Committee would be considering the question in its informal consultations over the next few days.

65. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that at the current session the Advisory Committee had repeatedly found itself having to comment on reports without having had enough time to get additional information from the secretariat. Whatever additional information could be supplied in informal consultations would of course be welcome. If the information could not be made available quickly, it could be supplied at a later date, to be specified by the Fifth Committee.

66. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should continue its consideration of the eight questions in informal consultations.

67. *It was so decided.*

Organization of work

68. **The Chairman** outlined the Committee's programme of work.

69. **Mr. Medina** (Morocco) said that the programme of work had not been approved in a formal meeting of the Committee, and his delegation had in fact objected to it in an informal meeting. It would like to know by what criterion the Bureau had decided to schedule a formal meeting for a Saturday.

70. **Mr. Ekorong A. Dong** (Cameroon) said that many sections of the proposed programme budget which closely affected Africa were still being considered in informal consultations. It was very important in particular for the Committee to take decisions on questions of programme planning, especially as the Committee for Programme and Coordination would be reviewing the medium-term plan in a few months' time. Many of the recommendations in the proposed programme budget concerned the New Agenda for the Development of Africa and required decisions before the end of the

session. His delegation would like to know what the Bureau's intentions were in that regard.

71. **Mr. Sulaiman** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation would also welcome an answer to the question put by the representative of Morocco concerning the scheduling of a formal meeting on a Saturday. It was usual to have only informal meetings at the weekend. The decision should be reconsidered.

72. **Mr. Monayair** (Kuwait) said that his delegation had requested at an earlier meeting that the Bureau should consult the States which observed Ramadan about the schedule of meetings. The Bureau should do so in the present case.

73. **Ms. Aragon** (Philippines) said that her delegation had made a statement on the programme of work at an earlier meeting. It hoped that the Bureau would take its concerns about agenda item 164 (Human resources management) into consideration.

74. **Mr. Adam** (Israel) said that his delegation shared the concern expressed by the Moroccan and other delegations about the scheduling of a formal meeting on a Saturday.

75. **Mr. Medina** (Morocco) said that his delegation deeply regretted that the Bureau continued to ignore the serious concerns of his and other delegations about the programme of work. Morocco's repeated expressions of disagreement with the programmes proposed by the Bureau had apparently fallen on deaf ears. If the Bureau continued to work in that fashion, it must assume full responsibility for any additional delay or blockage in the Committee's work due to poor management of the timetable. His delegation would not be bound by any decision taken outside normal working hours and it reserved the right to reopen any such decision in a formal meeting. He hoped that following a further meeting of the Bureau the Chairman would be able to answer all the questions raised by his delegation.

76. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that in the light of the various comments made it might be useful for the Bureau to review the programme of work for the remainder of the session. The Committee itself might then perhaps meet briefly to look at the pending items and decide what specific action must be taken and what items might be deferred. Such a meeting might be able to tidy up the programme of work.

77. **Mr. Ahounou** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that his delegation shared the concern expressed about the scheduling of a meeting on a Saturday during Ramadan. However, that would not be the first time that the General Assembly had worked on a Saturday. The Committee was under severe pressure, and all delegations must tolerate some inconvenience.

78. **The Chairman** said that before taking its decisions on the programme of work the Bureau did consider all the issues in depth. He could assure the Moroccan delegation and all the other delegations which had spoken on the question that the Bureau would re-examine the programme of work in the light of their comments and proposals and then report back to the Committee.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.